ROSE DUGDALE SPEAKING AT H-BLOCK MEETING

MARCH IN SUPPORT OF THOMOND STUDENTS
Letters

Communism?
Dear Mr. Doris,
In your reply to Mr. Dooley's letter in the issue dated Nov. 3rd, you insisted that the Students' Union as an 'people's defence organisation' should undermine any group or activity which is 'anti-people'.
Contrary to this humane facade, you profess to be a communist. To anyone with powers of reason, communists are 'anti-people'! One merely has to comprehend the inflexibility of life in the Soviet Union to-day, not to mention the saddening Afghan situation, to realise this.
Being emphatically democratic myself, I naturally uphold the right of the individual to think for her/himself. However, educated opinions do exceed ignorantly following the general crowd.
Additionally, my present beliefs were nurtured by my experience to date.

RINA COGGIN
C.E.D. 1

A Reply
Dear Ms Coggin,
You say "to anyone with powers of reason communists are anti-people".
In support of this you cite the anti-people nature of the regime in present day Soviet Union. On this latter point I'm entirely in agreement with you. But, I differ with your view that the Soviet Union is a communist country.
Based upon reports of conditions in present day Soviet society, not just from the western press but also official Soviet papers and magazines, it is clear that the chief characteristics of a socialist society do not exist any more in that country. The working class does not run the State. The evils of capitalist society are clearly to be found in the Soviet economy - i.e. massive foreign indebtedness, inflation food shortages, denial of national minority rights etc.
All these evils are great burdens on the backs of the working people. The Soviet Union to-day is not a socialist country, it is a capital- istic state, on a war footing, carrying out the same type of annexationist policies as the other imperialist superpowers - the U.S., in Africa, the Middle East, Caribbean and elsewhere. Both superpowers while preparing for world war to re-divide the world also collude against the attempts of the peoples to decide their own affairs. This is the position in the Iraqi-Iranian war, in which both superpowers are behind the Iraqi aggression from different standpoints but emphatically against the interests of the Iranian, Iraqi, Afghan and all the nations in that area of the world.
The Soviet rulers cover over their real motives with demagoguery about 'socialism' while the U.S. about 'democracy' and 'freedom'. Our Union policy is to oppose both superpowers equally. This policy was put forward by myself last year and adopted.
There is both in the western and Soviet states a deliberate policy to cultivate amongst the people a lack of understanding of the real situation in the world and of communism. Understanding requires a conscious act of finding out.
Experience alone can lead to wrong conclusions so they must be tested in practise. Marx said "philosophers interpret the world, the point is to change it."
Yours,
Brendan Doris

Hardcore Film
Dear Editor,
I would like to show my dislike of the film Hardcore Life which was shown on Tuesday 4th November.
It brought in "Pornographic Materials" which is illegal in this country and should be kept out. Also in the film the language was very harsh.
I am writing hoping to see a cut-down of this kind of film in this College.
Yours faithfully,

PATCH

You Were Warned!
Dear Patch,
While everyone is entitled to object to a film, you were warned.
The preview in this paper stated exactly what the content and subject matter of the film was. It would be extremely naive to expect Sunday school manners and language from the characters involved.
There was nothing illegal in showing this film. The B.S.F.S. is a member of the Federation of Irish Film Societies which is backed by the Arts Council and is legally entitled to show any film to members, who must be over 18.
Yours,
Gregory Kieran,
Chairman B.S.F.S.
WE MUST BE SERIOUS!

With each passing year the crisis in education as a result of government cuts increases. The effects are felt in every area by those who work and study in the schools and colleges. For the second year running the VEC in Dublin has had £1m cut from its budget. A secondary student in Dublin has only about one chance in forty of getting into third level education, while in the rest of the country there is a slightly greater chance (about one in fourteen).

There should be no question of it being a matter of chance whether a young person can receive an education. It is the duty of every state to provide the basic needs of its citizens. No Irish government has ever done this of any party.

If occupation of our own colleges could force the government to concede about £20m for expansion and the proper running of the Dublin VEC colleges then that is what we should advocate. But this or other actions restricted to the colleges will just let the government off the hook. Also what we as a single college can achieve in a problem affecting the entire country and the mass of the people is slight.

We must take the fight to the government and fight alongside the rest of the students for a decent basic education system.

USI has put forward a plan - adopted by a majority of the colleges - to take on the government over the next few weeks. This is a plan of internal propaganda and activity on specific problems in the colleges from now until Wednesday (26th Nov.), followed by public leafletting and posterising on the Thursday and a mass demonstration followed by an occupation of a public building on the Friday. We didn't agree with this plan as being enough of a confrontation with the government. However, we should participate in it to the maximum and develop better ways of taking up the fight in our own way in order to take the government to task and mobilize genuine student feeling against the cuts.
Deputy-President - Tommy Graham

This is my sixth year in Bolton St. I spent the first four years on block-release (3 months each year) as an apprentice fitter/turner. Last year I studied full-time in the Professional Engineering Course. This year I am doing the Mechanical Engineering Technician course (part-time). Thus, I have had wide experience of life in Bolton St. and have seen it from different angles, full-time, part-time and apprentice. I served on last year's Executive as Communications Officer.

Although I am not a member of any political party, I do have definite views of a political nature just like everybody else. I believe that the Students' Union as a defense organisation for students is political and that open political discussion must be allowed to take place within it. It is on this basis that I intend doing my job as Deputy-President and I hope that the students of Bolton St. will be satisfied with my performance in the coming year.

Two weeks ago the issue of College I.D. cards was brought to the Union's attention. We felt it was unnecessary, and a breach of privacy for the College to have a second photo of students on file. Representations were made to the Principal, Mr. O'Donnell and he was sympathetic. Students must now provide only 1 photo i.e. the one in the card itself and the new regulation that students must have an I.D. card in order to enter the exam-hall will not be rigidly enforced.

Education Officer - Ross Shorten

I am a full-time Surveying Student in E.E.D.2. My role in the Students' Union will be that of 'a moderate' in what is seen by many to be a 'hard line Union'.

During my term on the Executive I hope to be in a position to express my views on the solving of the problems inside the College.

I am against the S.U.'s involvement in issues concerning international politics, H-Block and so on. I consider that these issues have little to do with the Union and that people who feel strongly about such topics should seek outlets for their frustration through the appropriate organisations who share their views.

I am also against illegal disruptive behaviour on the part of the Union which I feel certain can do little to further the cause of our "Finance for Education" campaign, and will only show us up as being irresponsible radicals who don't even deserve the money which the State is already spending on us.

I am hopeful that mine is not a cry in the dark but rather a shout in the new dawn.

SUC Thurs 20th Nov.
KINEMA 1.00pm

General Tues 25th Nov
Meeting KINEMA 11.00am

Agenda for both: Finance for Education Campaign
Final Motions to Congress.
Nominations for delegates (4) Observers (2) to Congress.

Close at...
5.00pm MON. 24th NOV.
S.U.C.

MOTIONS to U.S.I. CONGRESS

At Students' Union Council on the 6th Nov. a number of steps were agreed in order to develop our Union's policy and present this policy in motions to U.S.I. Congress.

The Executive of the Union recommended that we should try and thrash out a sound position on taking up the fight against the education cuts. This was based on two arguments. Firstly, we needed to do this for ourselves since we hadn't agreed with USI policy on Education Finance for some time.

Secondly, although we are allowed eight motions under various policy agreed, the Executive, aware of the ridiculous amount of motions put into Congress suggested that by putting in one only, we, at least would not contribute to the congestion of business.

S.U.C. decided that we should submit a motion of the Financing of Education, but also there was a view that we should put in some motions which would sort out some of the bureaucracy of Congress and U.S.I. After some confusion and disagreement it was also agreed to put in a motion on the issue of the "political prisoners" by a vote of 14 to 7.

Below we are printing the holding motions we sent to USI. They are not fully developed. S.U.C. on the S.U.C. on the 20th Nov. and a General Meeting on the 25th will discuss and finalise the motions or withdraw them. We have until the 28th to have our final say on our own or other colleges motions.

Finance for Education
U.S.I. CONGRESS NOTES
WITH ANGER:

The deteriorating situation in education as regards finance, buildings, equipment, staffing levels, remuneration and financial support for students, grants etc.

CONGRESS CONSIDERS:

The situation to be of crisis proportions with overcrowding, education suffering, lack of opportunity, places etc.

CONGRESS RESOLVES:

That the past methods of dealing with Government by U.S.I. has not resulted in any significant change in policy toward education expenditure.

It also had the effect of leading to passivity, disillusionment and lack of interest among the bulk of the 70,000 members of U.S.I.

CONGRESS FURTHER RESOLVES TO:

Implement a plan of campaign against the cuts in Government expenditure by seriously taking the issue to the Government.

THROUGH:

In the first place relying on the students directly confronting the government themselves.

Secondly, establishing and building links with parents, teachers, College workers and the public for joint action against the Government.

Note: This is only a skeleton motion.

National Affairs
CONGRESS NOTES:

The five demands of the Irish Political Prisoners in the H-Block and Armagh jail.

CONGRESS FULLY SUPPORTS:

The demand for political status.

CONGRESS THEREFORE RECOMMENDS:

That every Students' Union affiliate to the National Smash H-Block Committee.

Note: This is in line with our present union policy.

Area Committees
CONGRESS MANDATES THE OFFICERS:

To set up area committees in the Sligo, Galway, Cork, Dublin, Belfast. Any Colleges not in these centres should be considered members of the committee geographically nearest to them.

Note: This is to try and get the officers of USI to build practical cooperation between the Colleges.

Motions for Congress
CONDUCT OF CONGRESS BUSINESS:

Motions to Congress shall be submitted to Congress on the basis of reports from the Officers on the following areas prepared by 1st October each year.

1. Union Organisation (National and Local).
2. Education-Financing of.
3. Education-Structure.
4. Education-Course content and assessment.
5. Ireland - National Question.
Thomond Students Win.

You will be glad to hear that the dispute over an extra exam in Thomond College, Limerick, has been settled. The 40 students involved have decided to sit the exam before Christmas having received specific guarantees from the College. A proper syllabus and sample paper will be provided and none of the questions will be on work already assessed. They will be allowed to sit their normal 3rd year exams next June and extra lectures have been arranged. And to avoid a repeat of this year's hassle a complete review of the exam system is in the pipeline. It is nice to hear some good news for a change!

CONSTITUTION

SCHEDULE CONGRESS
PARAGRAPH 3:

Delete first line. After "Each CO shall be entitled to a minimum of two delegates" Insert:

"Every College will have in addition an entitlement to one extra delegate if it has more than 300 and less than 500 students. Any College with over 500 students is entitled to one delegate for every 500 students over the first 500".

Note: This is to redress the total imbalance whereby representatives of 25% of USI members can outvote the other 75%. The system is loaded at present against the "Big" Colleges.

H-Block Committee.

Due to increased interest in the National Smash H-Block Committee, a smaller but equally powerful committee has been set up here in Bolton St. Contrary to general opinion we are not a militant political group but are merely concerned with the human dignity of prisoners in Armagh and H-Block.

In response to much demand another meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th November at 12.45. At this meeting it is hoped that a date will be set for an open debate on the H-Block issue. Members of the National H-Block Committee will be present. Both opposition and support are welcome.

Doreen O'Leary CEDI - member.
A Short, but True, Story

"Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world....."

As the Moroccan mayor might have said to the Irish Studio master, we got the same cool welcome but we missed out on the happy ending. The Bolton Street North Africa campaign started when we arrived in Morocco a mere three weeks late, and only then after lying about our ages (Is Liam Carlin under 21?)

The first real shock was when we arrived at our quarters, a disused orphanage resembling a rather run down Foreign Legion outpost. Picture the boundless luxuries of a small African orphanage in the closed season, hot and cold running cock-roaches, "do it yourself" outdoor laundry, beside an open sewer, and communal barracks dormitory with tiny livestock to keep one company at night.

With the efficiency normally associated with Bolton St./Ecole Speciale joint ventures, the project staggered off the ground and within three weeks we had a few drawing boards, soon followed by the first maps and aerial photographs, extricated with difficulty from the clutches of the supposedly co-operating authorities, whose answer to all requests was "pas de probleme" (loosely translated from Moroccan French it means, "not a snowball's chance in the Sahara").

I should explain at this stage the organisation of the project. We, six students and one Studio master from Bolton Street, along with ten Moroccan students and one French lecturer from the Ecole Speciale D'Architecture in Paris were supposedly invited by the local authorities of a town in Morocco to prepare an "Out Line Urban Development Plan". Soon after arrival it became clear that one of our "clients" the Mayor (a leading contender to replace Brando in "Godfather III") if ever there was one, had no more serious interest in the project beyond embezzling as much of the funds as possible; by spending as little of the allocated money on us as he could.

With such strictly limited facilities, together with a cook single-mindedly dedicated to poisoning us (he was permanently surrounded by a halo of copulating flies in his filthy kitchen) living conditions became rather bad. Local culinary specialities included Boeuf Botulism, Chicken Dysentery and Salmonella Salads, and one soon discovers the different laxative and diarrhoetic properties of local foods. In fact there was never a day when someone was not down sick.

We were eventually moved to a nearby Villa, spacious but completely empty. It offered as an added feature the constant company of its own swarms of mosquitoes. This eventually became our work base and "Home" except for meals, always, always, lovingly served from the Orphanage kitchen using American Food Aid Parcels.

Our work, including almost daily "site visits" to the nearby beaches, proceeded slowly, hampered by the continuous lack of co-operation from the authorities and local politicians, our clients. Many of these tended to see the project as a convenient aid for a little enlightened property speculation.

When information was finally extracted from the clutches of the reluctant "co-operating" authorities, it was frequently contradictory and always inadequate. We were trying in a very limited period to plan for an almost unplanable situation; a job which, if properly organised, would have taken a trained team months.

The organisation of the project was not helped by the lively domestic activities of one of the staff with some local "camp followers", resulting in his serving a short period in jail, after which he lost all interest in the project.

Things got so bad that three of the Bolton St. group decided for various reasons that they would not continue any longer and left.

Eventually, and quite surprisingly, a report and series of proposals was shown together. These were of a very superficial nature; which given the time, incompetent organisation and totally inadequate information, was probably all that was possible. (Even to the very end there was no indication as to how many people we were supposed to plan for, estimates ranging from 80,000 to 350,000 depending on how you did your sums!)

The project having been as decently finished as was possible, those of us

Contd.on Page 10.
H-Block Meeting – Report

The meeting took place on Tuesday 11th November in the Kinema and was attended by a large crowd of students, apprentices and some college staff workers (about 150 people). Speakers included Brendan Doris, S.U. President Rose Dugdale and Liam Connolly (Bolton St. apprentice).

The speakers gave a short history of the protest and an outline of the present situation. It was pointed out that Britain has always tried to brand Irish freedom fighters as criminals and the example of O’Donovan Rossa was cited. The media, both here and in Britain, had not helped and at a recent H-Block meeting, Vincent Browne (definitely no Provo supporter) said that Irish journalists should be ashamed of themselves the way they had ignored the protest.

The national student organisation, U.S.I. it seems, is no better. A motion from Bolton St. on the political prisoners which, among other things, called for discussion was defeated at last year’s Congress.

Rose Dugdale gave some details of the protest in Armagh Women’s jail. She pointed out that when the extermination camps were discovered in Germany after the war local people hung their heads and said they didn’t know. She didn’t want the same to happen here.

When the discussion was thrown open to the floor there followed many heated exchanges. On the one hand were those who regarded the prisoners as terrorists and murderers i.e., criminals and deserving of no support whatsoever. On the other were those who regarded them as victims of a political situation or simply as freedom-fighters.

There were also those who were opposed to the Provo’s campaign but who were concerned for the situation in the H-Block on humanitarian grounds. When a vote was taken to gauge the feeling of the meeting there was a 2:1 majority in favour of supporting the 5 demands of the prisoners. It was also decided to set up a H-Block committee and about 10 people put their names forward. (Keep an eye out for notices!)

No doubt more discussion (heated!) will take place in the coming weeks at S.U.C. (Thurs. 20th Nov.) and at a General Meeting (Tues. 25th Nov.) when we come to amend our motions to U.S.I. Congress.

Meeting
STUDENTS AGAINST H-BLOCK
Thurs. Nov. 20th. 1 p.m.
TRINITY COLLEGE Dining Hall steps. Bernadette Mc Alliskey, speaker.
March: Sat. Nov. 22nd. 2.30 Parnell Square.

Take an Active Part!
The present Dublin District Junior Workers committee has been established for over a year and needs more members to actively take part in it. If you are a member of the A.U.E.W. (Eng. section) and are interested in attending committee meetings or want more info, contact:-

George Hill, Secretary J.W.C.
7, Walnut Avenue, Drumcondra, DUBLIN 9.

or leave your name at the Students’ Union office.
The H-Block protest started in 1976 after the phasing-out of political status. (Special category status). The intention of this was to brand the prisoners criminals and in turn project their cause - National Liberation - as criminal.

The first man to refuse to wear the prison gear was Kieran Nugent. When he refused, he was beaten by the screws and stripped of all his clothing, a screw then threw a blanket at him, thus, the blanket protest began, not started by the men but the prison regime.

Over the following months and years the numbers grew and grew, swelling to over 380. The vast majority being between the ages of 18 and 21, with some as young as 16. Up to 80% of the prisoners are there on the sole evidence of a signed confession extracted out of them in the infamous torture centres of Castlereagh, Gough barracks, Omagh and Springfield Road.

The men were locked up 24 hours per day with nothing but a blanket. They got no exercise, no recreation, no books or other reading material, no T.V. or radio, no medical attention. They suffered extremes of cold and heat, with the heating being turned on full in the summer and down or off in the winter. The men emptied their pots into a plastic container brought around to the door of the cell by the loyalist prisoners who act as orderlys in return for remission. The prisoners were not allowed out to the toilet. They had to use the pot in the cell. When they went to the showers once a week for 5 minutes they were subjected to assaults and private and degrading searches. For example five or six screws would gather around a naked man, making insulting remarks, trying to degrade him and also trying to boost their own morale. The prisoners then decided that they would not take this kind of treatment so they refused to leave their cells. The meals were delivered at the same time as the cells were being slopped out, and the food was handled with the same gloves as those used to empty the excreta filled pots.

In late 1977 the screws stepped up their harassment of the prisoners in a vain attempt to break the protest. They would come into the cell and kick over the pots on top of the mattress (3" thick piece of uncovered foam about 5'6" long). This left the place stinking and as the weeks went on the men woke up to find maggots crawling up their nose so they threw the slops out the window and spy hole, but the screws only threw it back in again, all over their blanket and mattress. The only option left open to the men was to smear it on the walls of the cell, to keep their bedding and blankets somewhat free from the filth. I would make the point that the prisoners did not like doing this, it was not self inflicted it was inflicted by the system. The screws then blocked up the windows and spy-holes.

The prisoners keep their morale up by running Irish classes French classes and Maths. classes all of which are shouted from cell to cell. The main language used now by the prisoners in the blocks is Irish.

The beatings and harassment were really getting bad at this stage, with gangs of screws (warders) coming into a wing at any time of day or night and systematically beating every prisoner in the wing. The prisoners were subjected to the mirror search coming and going on visits. This search involves squatting over a mirror while your back passage is probed with a long object or a gloved or ungloved hand. Thus, the prisoners refused to co-operate so the screws forcibly squatted them over it.

As the final step in their peaceful protest the prisoners have decided to embark upon a hunger strike to the death in order to gain recognition as political prisoners. I urge you to support them in any way possible.

P.S. Since 27th October a further 140 men have gone on Blanket Protest in Long Kesh and Crumlin Road in support of the Hunger Strikers.

The 5 Demands

1. No Prison Uniform
3. Free Association with Other Political Prisoners
4. The right to organise education and craft etc.
   1 letter: 1 visit: 1 food parcel per week.
5. Restoration of full remission of sentence.
Greetings Earthlings,

Once more onto the breach, my friends. Despite some technical hitches (the late arrival of some of the band due to late nights — poor knowledge of geography or both) the KATMANDU concert last Wednesday week (5/11/80) went off (in my obviously jaundiced opinion) reasonably well (let the back slapping begin). (back stabbing?)

Angry and ugly crowd scenes were avoided by the clever manipulative ploy of playing soothing taped music to the assembled masses: To make a short story longer, KAGMANDU took to the stage well after they were due to begin (yes that's it they were late). Grovelling apologies all round but due to circumstances beyond our control the management cannot be held responsible for circumstances beyond our control blah, blah, blah.

Cheeky demands for refunds were met by restrained maniacal laughter (caveat emptor).

Egged on by an increasingly restless crowd who sat squirming in their seats and looking positively uncomfortable KATMANDU launched into their first number—a snappy little tune I don't remember. Then came an undoubtedly definitive version of Roxy Music's Virginia Plains. In between — in the middle came the quirky gimmick and the subliminal Australia (one half of the single — plug). A rendering of 'Heroes' finished the unfortunately short set. At this stage (the one which they played on) and towards the end much head nodding and foot tapping was happening. Oh wow!

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who remained made our escape by plane from Cassablanca (a city with all the oriental mystique of Liverpool on a smoggy day). To the imagined tinkle of Sam's piano I left Morocco in a concussed daze, my head having come into recent contact with a local mugger's boot not as dramatic an ending as the film but I know how relieved they must have felt.

This is an eye witness account by one of the few survivors of the Great Bolton St. North Africa Campaign.

All charitable donations, no matter how small, to the " Victims of Morocco Fund" — c/o A.S.A. Bolton St.

NICHOLAS SUTTON
Stolen from "Hardcore" — Ed.

The Swissmakers
The story of two Swiss Immigration police whose job is to vet people for Swiss citizenship. A funny ironic film that pokes at the Swiss idea that they are the most perfect people on earth.

Fritz the Cat
A feature cartoon about an episode in the life of Fritz, the sexy minded cat. Not from the Disney studios.

Christmas Morning
A short, set to Paul Brady's song Arthur McBride.

(Showing with Fritz the Cat)

SPORT

KARATE
The Karate Club have been unable to obtain the use of the Gym. Enquiries have been made about the use of another hall without success. Therefore, the club has been unable to start training.

However, if anyone interested can assist in arranging a hall, please contact the SU Sports Officer.

RUGBY
The Rugby Club are having a meeting on Wednesday 19th November in room B.13 at 1.15 p.m. Any person who would like to join the club should attend. If you are unable to attend please contact the club secretary, c/o the Students Union.

SOME ACTUAL NEWS
No concert last Wednesday because yet another Dublin Band became a casualty of musical and directional differences, and were rushed to the out-patients of a nearby city centre hospital. No survivors are expected. Remember you read it here.

Yet another scoop for the Student/Apprentice.